



29 November 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director

SUBJECT : Lt. Colonel Shockley's Critique of the Collection  
of Intelligence on the ARVN

1. On Friday, 28 November, [ ] learned that the House Select Committee staff was in possession of a memorandum criticizing intelligence activities in Vietnam written by a gentleman named Shockley. There was also some suggestion that Mr. Shockley might be one of the witnesses called by the Committee for questioning after it heard General Graham at the 3 December session. Precisely who Shockley was or what he was now doing was not clear but the word we received was that he had been with the DAO's office in Saigon and was now working in the Pentagon. Linda, ever efficient, knew Shockley and gave me his telephone and room numbers, from which it was clear that he worked somewhere in Al Hall's empire.

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2. A telephone chat with Tom Latimer verified that Shockley worked for Al Hall. I then called Hall, explained the situation, and asked if he had any objections to my talking with Shockley and, if possible, getting a copy of the document in question. He did not. I called Shockley himself soon thereafter and had an amiable telephone conversation with him, during the course of which he explained his position in the DAO and readily agreed to send me a copy of his memorandum. He also explained that the memo was a personal statement he had written after his return from Vietnam last spring and forwarded it through channels to the Secretary of Defense, though he was not aware whether the Secretary had ever actually received it. He wryly noted that the first two generals he showed it to had promptly classified it. He also explained how it had come to the attention of the House: two House investigators came to see him some weeks ago and when he asked for instructions, he was told to tell and show them everything -- so he did.

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3. A copy of the memo is attached. It is not likely to cause us any trouble, but it is a fascinating document of considerable intrinsic interest and importance. It points up a problem that was particularly acute in Vietnam but occurs world-wide, especially in areas where there is a close relationship between a US advisory establishment and the local government's armed services. It is a piece of paper I commend to your perusal and believe will be of interest to the other recipients of this memorandum.



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George A. Carver, Jr.  
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

Attachment

cc: DDCI  
DDO  
C/EA  
ADDI  
NIO/SSEA  
Special Counsel to the Director  
D/DCI/IC

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M-O-N-O-G-R-A-P-H

INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION IN VIETNAM

March 1974 - March 1975

H. A. SHOCKLEY, LTC, MI  
Chief, Collection and Liaison  
Defense Attache Office, Saigon

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1. PURPOSE: As the last operational chief of intelligence collection in Vietnam, I encountered problem areas and restrictions on my ability to report that I feel are worthy of note. Although the final chapter has closed on Vietnam, it is hoped that the experiences of that final year in our Vietnam odyssey may prove instructive.
2. MISSION: As Chief of Collection and Liaison in the Office of the Defense Attache, Vietnam, I was responsible to the Chief, Operations and Plans Division for the collection of intelligence, the coordination of intelligence collection means, liaison with and the supervision of training and military assistance to the intelligence services and staffs of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF). Included in these responsibilities were: coordination with the Attache Elements of other nations, coordination with other U.S. Intelligence agencies in Vietnam and Thailand, quality control of the operations and reporting of the clandestine U.S. intelligence effort in Vietnam, supervision of liaison officers in each of the four military regions and with the intelligence staffs of the RVNAF. My staff consisted of some 65 American direct hire personnel and two hundred Vietnamese foreign nationals in a direct hire status. Intelligence collection guidance came from: DAO Saigon, DIA, CINCPAC, and the United States Special Activities Group (USSAG) in Thailand. In the absence of the Chief of Operations and Plans, I acted on his behalf as Chief of Intelligence.
3. MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT: Mission accomplishment was hampered by the quality of the personnel available to do the collection, by the quality of the guidance for collection provided, by a prohibition on collection against "political", "controversial", and "sensitive" targets, by the inherent attitude within the Mission of "not telling our problems", and by the general attitude that Vietnam had indeed receded into the backwaters of world interest. The Motto of DAO could have been:

"Anything not worth doing is not worth doing well."

a. Quality of Personnel - The human raw material available for the mission was in the main mediocre. In a largely civilian organization (50 military and 1,200 civilians) the pool of available manpower for an organization designed to self-destruct in one year was understandably small. As a result many of the key personnel in the DAO were "hangers-on" in Vietnam. They included Americans married to/or cohabitating with Vietnamese, personnel who had been in intelligence related organizations and had been RIF'd, those who were no longer welcome in the United States by families, creditors, and legal authorities, and a fair share of young adventurers seeking easy money in an exotic environment. A small core of Intelligence professionals from DIA and ARPAC were also available but, perversely, were for the most part, assigned to areas in which they clearly had neither experience nor expertise. Most of these personnel were one to two grades higher than they could have reached in the U.S. (if hireable) and had found the pay and benefits (+ 25% differential + housing allowance + guaranteed 10 hours per week overtime + environmental and morale leave) to be highly conducive towards maintenance of the status quo. The organizer of this group was a passed-over Lieutenant Colonel of Army Security Agency experience who admittedly did not "know the first thing about HUMINT, PHOTINT, or overt liaison" when he arrived. To his credit, he took what resources he had in hand and attempted to organize them and guide them in a meaningful way. When informed of my selection for a third tour in Vietnam, this time as chief of collection, I raised the question of my qualifications for the assignment. I had only served as an analyst in my previous intelligence experience. (See inclosure 1) I felt I was better qualified for the assignment as Chief of Current Intelligence which was to come due for reassignment in July 1974. My misgivings were set aside by Branch with the assurance that I was indeed the best qualified Lieutenant Colonel in the Military Intelligence Branch to fit this slot. I learned a great deal, but on-the-job training is not conducive to proper collection management. Given the restrictions under which I worked, it is doubtful that much more could have been accomplished by one properly trained and experienced.

b. Quality of Guidance - The office upon my arrival functioned on the basis of a hastily drawn up collection plan that was based on MACV directives of the 1960's and required entirely too much detail on North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces and nothing on RVNAF. Despite the fact that our advisory effort had ceased and that we had subscribed to the "Accords" we refused to change the rules to allow meaningful

collection against the RVNAF. DAO refused to discard this anachronistic policy. As a result, we were never able to get a meaningful look at the "friendly forces." (Efforts to change this doctrine are detailed below.)

c. Collection Restrictions -

(1) Within DAO: As a result of the adherence to existing JCS directives that required "friendly" or "operational" reporting to come through the operations side of DAO, all reporting on friendly forces had to be coordinated through the appropriate DAO division. For example, the frequent reports that ammunition was not reaching the deployed units were caveated by self serving DAO statements, such as: "there are \_\_\_\_\_ rounds of ammunition available in the particular Corps area"; "an adequate system of distribution has been established"; or "the Commander has assured DAO that all ammunition has reached the intended hands". This policy resulted in the DAO never accepting reports of shortage or improper distribution of supplies unless they themselves had verified it; a process they were incapable of accomplishing. The long standing "counter-part" relationship still stood and the protective instincts that plagued our efforts at honest reporting throughout the war were alive and well and dwelling in DAO Saigon. Operational reports were, in the main, simply retransmitted Vietnamese situation reports or logistically oriented reports. They were not designed to make qualitative judgments concerning the fighting abilities, leadership, or morale of RVNAF forces. The personnel "monitoring" operations had no substantive feel for the RVNAF units on which they daily reported. None had been in the field to inspect them, few had had contacts with Vietnamese officers above the rank of captain, and most demurred when asked to evaluate the units they had been reporting on for -- in several cases -- 12 months or more. Both General Murray and General Smith were logisticians who paid scant attention to the intelligence situation, or the day-to-day activities in Vietnam except as they effected logistics. AF General Maglione did show interest in operations and monitored them closely but his replacement BG Baughn reorganized the DAO to take himself out of the operational chain and concerned himself with Air Force and organizational matters almost exclusively. Fortunately, Colonel Le Gro, Chief of Operations and Plans, probably the best informed and most astute military observer in Vietnam, was acutely aware of the situation and so reported it. On most operational or intelligence matters the senior officers deferred to Le Gro who acted as the DAO spokesman with the Ambassador.

(2) Mission Restrictions - The Ambassador personally and through his Political Section monitored very closely the intelligence reporting from Vietnam. All reports generated by my office (approximately 1,200 per month) were passed to him after dispatch. My attempts to bring some qualitative dimension to RVNAF reporting came to his attention quickly, and his displeasure was voiced to Colonel Le Gro in clear and unmistakable terms. My guidelines thereafter were: anything that smacks of the "political" (i.e., criticism of Thieu, operations of the Military Region Commanders in their "civil administration roles", and "non-tactical" operations of any military or para-military units (RF, PF, and PSDF)); "economic" (to include reports on corruption); or is potentially "embarrassing to our efforts" must be approved in advance by the Embassy. Later this was modified by requiring my office to "pass" to the Embassy for their release any information collected on these subjects. In the earlier experiences reports were severely edited, refused approval, or delayed to the point they were no longer of value. In the latter months most reports simply disappeared into the great Embassy maw never to be seen or heard of again. Aside from the reporting restrictions there were collection restrictions that limited the flow of information into the DAO. Field personnel -- 14 U.S. and approximately 100 Vietnamese -- assigned to the military regions were placed under the operational control of the respective Consuls-General. While this was done to give the Ambassador's representative a head of "country team" role it resulted in crippling restrictions in at least two of the critical Corps areas (MR-I and MR-III) and some minor but occasionally serious restrictions in the other two MRs. First, the Con-Gens controlled all secure communications and courier services. In MRs I and III all DAO reporting was "approved" by the Consuls-General before dispatch. This meant editing, changing, delay, and often times denial of reports that did not support the Con-Gen institutional position. In MR III, Mr. Peters refused to allow the DAO representative to attend daily Corps staff meetings, meet with flag officers of the Vietnamese staff and operational commands, and attempted to restrict meetings with the G-2 of III Corps. This resulted in at best "un-even" reporting from the field but also sorely tried the patience and eventually eroded the initiative of field collection personnel. To their credit, and partially because of their justifiable feeling that the DAO operation was amateurish, the CIA did not interfere with DAO collection operations and in fact provided us on occasion with communications channels, logistics support and good field cooperation.

INCLOSURE 1

SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC AND EXPERIENTIAL FACTORS

SOUTHEAST ASIA

HENRY A. SHOCKLEY, LTC, MI

EXPERIENCE

Military Intelligence

Defense Attache Office, Vietnam - Chief of Collection and Liaison

Responsible for the development and implementation of the U.S. intelligence collection program for Vietnam; the conduct of country-wide liaison with the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces; and for interagency coordination on collection matters. Supervision of 280 people in this activity (March 1974 - March 1975).

Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, U.S. Army

Chief, South and Southeast Asia Branch, Eastern Division, Directorate of Foreign Intelligence. Review and analysis of information produced at the highest levels; preparation and presentation of intelligence briefings, assessments, and estimates for the Secretary of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Army, and other key Under Secretary and General Officer personnel on Asian political and military affairs. Supervision of four officers (July 1970 - July 1972).

Defense Intelligence Agency

Production of current intelligence briefings, order of battle studies, Joint Intelligence Estimates for Planning, Area Handbooks on Indochina for the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the National Security Council. Supervision of six officers (December 1965 - August 1967).

U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam

Member of Presidentially Appointed Joint Agency Task Force to determine the future of the low level Defector Program in Vietnam

(3) Higher Headquarters Non-Support - My earliest assessments of the situation in Vietnam convinced me that with existing operating rules in being and the personality and institutional position staked out by the Mission Chief, my only hope lay with higher headquarters. I hoped, in vain, that when presented the arguments in logical sequence, DIA would move to assert its primacy as the analytical agency for "friendly forces" vice the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This would properly, in my view, place all of the forces in Vietnam rather than only so called "enemy forces" under the scrutiny of intelligence. To this end I requested an immediate evaluation of all of my products, to be followed in 90 days by a conference with CINCPAC J-2 and DIA to get the results of this evaluation hopefully, to point up our need to start reporting on RVNAF. The Conference came off in August, I briefed not only DIA but an assemblage of analysts and middle managers from the Community and I returned to Vietnam with the assurance that our operating directives would be changed. Upon my return to Vietnam I was informed that I was to represent DAO at an intelligence community "Southeast Asia Conference" to be held at Fort Ritchie, MD in early October. I grasped this opportunity to undertake an in-house DAO net threat assessment which graphically pointed up the "friendly forces" collection gaps extant. This assessment was met with praise at the Conference and promises were exacted from the DIA and NIO representatives to change our operating rules and make the flow of information more meaningful. When no results were forthcoming by mid-November, I persuaded General Smith to write to LTG Graham, the Director of DIA, outlining the problem and requesting his assistance in freeing us from this reporting restriction. General Graham answered in late December that he would take positive action. I readdressed this problem to BGEN Thompson, DIA, in person in January 1975. No action was taken to the date of my departure from Vietnam on 22 March 1975 (as Hue was taken under seige).

4. CONCLUSIONS: From my earliest associations with Vietnam (1961) I have been concerned about U. S. handling of information from that area. Despite the lip service paid to the "accords" the U. S. Mission in Vietnam displayed a highly partisan and paternal attitude towards the Vietnamese military establishment. This included deliberate and reflexive manipulation of information, restrictions on collection and censorship of reporting. The net result was that decision makers were denied the opportunity to get a complete flow of information, determine its validity for themselves, and make decisions accordingly. The impression gained from higher officialdom in Washington when these matters have been brought to their attention is that we had "written off Vietnam" and that every day it remained free was a plus for U. S. policy. Unfortunately, this view was either not transmitted to the field, or ignored.



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(the Chieu Hoi Program). Research was done with State, USAID, USIA, and DoD personnel and in conjunction with RAND Corporation to determine the state and future of the Chieu Hoi Program. Report was briefed to the U.S. Country Team, the Secretary of Defense, and the President of the United States. As a result of the study the Phoenix Program was instituted (March - November 1965).

### Other Military Related Experience

#### Military Assistance Advisory Group - Vietnam

Advisor to two battalions of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (1961) principal advisor to the G-2, Third ARVN Corps with special responsibilities concerned with development of combat intelligence capability and with Corps wide planning for military operations (1962).

### EDUCATION

#### Civilian

Doctor of Philosophy in International Relations - The School of International Service, The American University, Washington, D. C., May 1973. Tools of Research: French and Vietnamese; Comprehensive Fields: International Law, International Organization, International Relations of Southeast Asia, and Theory of International Relations. Dissertation: "The Reluctant Raj: British Defense Policy Toward Malaysia, 1941-1971."

Master of Arts in International Relations - The School of International Service, The American University, Washington, D. C., 1964. Degree awarded in connection with the Foreign Area Specialist Training Program.

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science - Richmond College of the University of Richmond, Virginia, June 1955; Distinguished Military Graduate.

#### Military

#### Foreign Area Specialist Training Program

Eleven months of intensive language training in Vietnamese (1962 - 1963); 11 months residence at the American University in Washington, D. C.; completion of degree requirements leading to a

Masters Degree in South and Southeast Asian Area Studies in June 1964. Primary concentration was on international relations, geography, political systems, social, ethnic, religious and economic background of the peoples of South and Southeast Asia (India, Pakistan, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, North and South Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, and the Philippines). In-country training included tours of every province in Vietnam, interviews with key government and military officials, and additional language training. Trips for area orientation were taken to: India, Burma, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and Hong Kong. Graduation from the FAST Program completed November 1965.

Foreign Service Institute, Department of State, Washington, D.C.

Attended Inter-Agency Foreign Affairs Seminar for senior officials involved in the policy making process (1974).

Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia

Joint Service Middle Grade Officers School designed to train officers for responsibilities in managerial positions on JCS, Departments of the Army and Defense Staffs (1970).

Advanced Military Intelligence Officers' Course, Ft. Holabird, Maryland

Five months course in advanced training for military intelligence officers in the middle grades. Curriculum included training in all facets of intelligence. Graduated 8th in a class of 47 officers (1964).

Basic Infantry Officers' Qualification Courses, Ft. Benning, Georgia

Basic Infantry Officers' Course (5 months), Basic Airborne Course (1 month), Ranger Course (2 months); all completed during the period August 1955 - April 1956.

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